

Allen-Scott Report

# Johnson Rejects Four Freedoms Award; Liberals May Be Reason

By ROBERT S. ALLEN and PAUL SCOTT

A mystery-shrouded change of mind by Vice President Lyndon Johnson is causing bewildered consternation among officials of the Four Freedoms Foundation.

Without the slightest hint or explanation, Johnson has decided he doesn't want the award the liberal organization bestows annually for "distinguished service in the cause of freedom."

Particular reason for the foundation officials' pained perturbation is that last year the Texan agreed to accept their award.

At that time the formal elaborate presentation, with a widely publicized speech by Johnson, was postponed because of the protracted session of Congress, the hot election battle climaxed by the Cuban missile crisis, and inability to mesh a date in to Johnson's busy schedule.

It was therefore decided to delay the ceremony until this winter or spring. Recently three dates were proposed to Johnson when the desired hotel banquet auditorium would be available.

His reply was to indicate he didn't want the award; that he desired the whole affair to be shelved and forgotten.

What happens next remains to be seen! SOME FOUNDATION officials favor appealing to Johnson to reconsider. Others, hot under the collar, are vigorously for withdrawing the award and offering it to either President Kennedy or his brother, the Attorney General.

Whether they would accept is not known. They would have to be sounded out on that.

Ironically, exactly that was proposed last year before the award was tagged for Johnson. But friends of his urged it be given him first and then presented to one of the Kennedys in 1964 — a presidential election year. Now that neat strategy has apparently backfired because of Johnson's mysterious change of mind.

The Four Freedoms Foundation, organized in 1951 to "perpetuate the ideals of the Four Freedoms of President Franklin D. Roosevelt," distributes literature to schools, sponsors ex-

say contests and presents an award to a nationally known leader. Judge Ferdinand Pecora, one-time New Deal Wall Street investigator, heads the foundation.

RECIPIENTS INCLUDE former President Truman, the late Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt, the late Gen. George Marshall, Dr. Ralph Bunche, former Gov. Averell Harriman, former Philippine Ambassador Carlos Romulo, former UN Ambassador and 1960 Republican vice presidential candidate Henry Cabot Lodge, and AFL-CIO President George Meany, the latest recipient.

Johnson is deeply grieved by the bitter cutting he got from liberals in and out of Congress in the recent protracted but futile fight to curb filibusters. The militants charged him with ruling against them at crucial show-downs.

Assistant Senate Democratic Leader Hubert Humphrey, Minn., and some other liberals warmly defended Johnson. But that hasn't assuaged his unhappiness.

THE WHOLE STORY—State Department officials are still quivering from the jolt they got from Senator Eugene McCarthy, D-Minn.

Soon after he issued a statement sharply criticizing the President's handling of the clash with General de Gaulle, one of Secretary Dean Rusk's aides telephoned McCarthy.

"The Secretary would like very much to give you a briefing on U.S. relations with France," explained the assistant. "The Secretary feels that would give you a better understanding of our position as regards De Gaulle's policy of creating an independent nuclear force."

"All right," replied McCarthy amiably. "I'll set aside three days next week and you or anyone else the Secretary designates can come up and brief me."

"Oh," exclaimed the State Department official, "all that time won't be necessary. All I will need is about one hour."

"In that case don't bother," retorted McCarthy. "To really understand De Gaulle it will be necessary to cover at least the last several hundred years of French history. That should take about three days if it is done right. If all you are prepared to present is an hour briefing, then forget it. You can't tell the whole De Gaulle story in one hour or one day."



Mr. Allen